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February 19, 2019

Mr. Mark Emmert  
NCAA President  
700 W. Washington Street  
P.O. Box 6222  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46206-6222

Dear President Emmert,

Recently, I issued a statement in response to the NCAA Committee on Infraction's (COI) severe punishment of the University of Missouri Athletics Department. I wanted to take the time to expand upon my original statement and voice my support for the University of Missouri (MU) and its current leadership as they continue to navigate this punishment – one that is harmful to the coaches, student-athletes and staff who had nothing to do with the actions of a sole individual.

As a former university president, I believe the sanctions levied by the NCAA's COI were overreaching, especially considering the university was transparent and open during the process of the investigation. In COI's own report, they agreed these transgressions were performed by a rogue tutor and MU took immediate action to rectify the problem. The committee even cited MU officials for their exemplary cooperation. By issuing these sanctions, the COI has set a dangerous precedent that cooperation is wrong.

Most of all, these sanctions negatively and directly punish student-athletes and coaches who had nothing to do with the charges. Student-athletes are being told they cannot pursue championships at the highest level, and they can no longer chase their dreams, because of isolated violations that occurred years ago. Rather than punishing innocent student-athletes, the COI should continue to encourage schools to report violations and look for solutions.

It is my hope that the NCAA will revisit this case and not punish today's upstanding MU athletes because of isolated violations that occurred years ago. The University of Missouri and the state of Missouri deserve a second look at this situation.

Sincere regards,

  
Roy Blunt  
United States Senator

cc: NCAA Committee on Infractions  
University of Missouri